

THE  
SPEECH  
OF A  
Reverend Bishop  
OF THE  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND.  
IN  
DEFENCE  
OF  
THEMSELVES  
AND THE  
GOVERNMENT.

Against the Malicious LIBELS  
of these TIMES.

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Printed in the Year, 1678.

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OF A  
Reverend Bishop

DEAN  
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DEBATE

ON  
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Against the Malicious Falsities  
of the TIMES.

Printed in the Year 1879



## MY LORDS,

I Shall not need to speak of the Infamous Course of *Libelling* in any kind. Nor of the *Punishment* of it, which in some cases was *Capital* by the *Imperial Laws*.

Nor how *patiently* some great Men, very great Men indeed, have bourn the tearing and rending of their *Credit* and *Reputation*, with a gentle, nay, a generous mind.

But of all *Libels*, they are most *odious* which pretend *Religion* : as if that of all things did desire to be defended by a *Mouth* that is like an open *Sepulchre*, or by a *Pen* that is made of a sick and a loathsome *Quill*.

There were times when *Persecutions* were great in the *Church*, even to exceed *Barbarity* it self : did any *Martyr* or *Confessor*, in those times, *Libel* the *Governours*? Surely no; not one of them to my best *Remembrance* : Yet these complain without cause; and in the mean time *Libel* and rayl without all measure. So little of kin are they to those which *suffer for Christ*, or the least part of *Christian Religion*.

*My Lords*, It is not every mans *spirit* to hold up against the *Venome* which *Libellers* spit. For *S. Ambrose*, who was a stout and a worthy *Prelate*, tells us, not that himself, but that a far greater Man than he, that's *K. David*, had found out (so it seems in his *judgements* 'twas no matter of ordinary ability) *Grande invention*, a great and mighty invention, how to swallow and put off those bitter *contumelies* of the *Tongue*: and those of the *Pen* are no whit less, and spread farther: And it was a great one indeed, and well becomed the greatness of *David*. But I think it will be far better for me to look upward, and praise it, than to look downward, and discourse upon it.

In the mean time I shall remember what an *Antient* under the name of *S. Hierom* tells us, *Indignum est & praeposterum*, 'Tis unworthy in it self, and preposterous in demeanour for a man to be ashamed for doing good, because other men glory in speaking ill.

And I can say it clearly and truly, as in the presence of God, I have done nothing, as a *Prelate*, to the uttermost of what I am conscious, but with a single heart, and with a sincere intention for the good Government and Honour of the Church, and the maintenance of the Orthodox Truth and Religion of Christ professed, established, and maintained in this Church of England.

For our care of this Church, the upholding of the External Worship of God in it, and the settling of it to the Rules of its first Reformation, are the causes (and the sole causes, what ever are pretended) of all their malice against us.

For 'tis most apparent to any man that will not wink, that the Intention of these men, and their abettors, is to raise Sedition, being as great Incumbents in the State (where they get power) as they have ever been in the Church; Novation himself hardly greater.

Our main Crime is (would they all speak out, as some of them do) that we are Bishops: were we not so, some of us might be as passable as other men.

And

And a great trouble is to them, that we maintain that our Calling of Bishops is *Jure Divino*, by Divine Right: This I will say, and abide by it, that the Calling of Bishops is *Jure Divino*, by Divine Right, though not all Adjuncts to their calling. And this I say in as direct opposition to the Church of Rome, as to the Pharisaick humour.

And I say farther, that from the Apostles times, in all ages, in all places, the Church of Christ was Governed by Bishops: And Lay-Elders never heard of, till Calvinus new-fangled device at Geneva.

Now this is made by these men, as if it were *Contra Regem*, against the King, in right or in power.

But that's a meer ignorant shift; for our being Bishops, *Jure Divino*, by Divine Right, takes nothing from the Kings Right or power over us. For though our Office be from God and Christ immediately, yet may we not exercise that power, either of Order or Jurisdiction, but as God hath appointed us, that is, not in his Majesties, or any Christian Kings Kingdoms, but by and under the power of the King given us so to do.

And were this a good Argument against us, as Bishops, it must needs be good against Priests and Ministers too; for themselves grant that their Calling is *Jure Divino*, by Divine Right; and yet I hope they will not say, that to be Priests and Ministers is against the King, or any His Royal Prerogatives.

Next, suppose our Callings, as Bishops, could not be made good *Jure Divino*, by Divine Right; yet *Jure Ecclesiastico*, by Ecclesiastical Right it cannot be denied. And here in England the Bishops are confirmed both in their power and means, by Act of Parliament. So that here we stand in as good case, as the present Laws of the Realm can make us. And so we must stand, till the Laws shall be repealed by the same power that made them.

Now then, suppose we had no other string to hold by (I say suppose this, but I grant it not) yet no man can Libell against



our *Calling* (as these men do) be it in *Pulpit*, *Print*, or otherwise, but he *Libels* against the *King* and the *State*, by whose *Laws* we are established. Therefore, all these *Libels*, so far forth as they are against our *Calling*, are against the *King* and the *Law*, and can have no other purpose, than to stir up *Sedition* among the people.

If these men have any other *intention*, or if they have any *Christian* or *charitable* desire, to *reform* any thing amiss; why do they not modestly *Petition His Majesty* about it, that in his *Princely Wisdom* he might set all things right, in a *Just* and *Orderly* manner? But this is neither their *Intention*, nor *way*. For one clamours out of his *Pulpit*, and all of them from the *Press*, and in a most virulent and *unchristian* manner set themselves to make a *heat* among the people; and so by *Mutiny*, to effect that, which by *Law* they cannot: And, by most false and unjust *Calumnies* to defame both our *Callings* and *Persons*. For for my part, as I pittie their rage, so I heartily pray *God* to forgive their malice.

No *Nation* hath ever appeared more jealous of *Religion*, then the people of *England* have ever been. And their *zeal* to *Gods* glory hath been, and at this day is a great *honour* to them. But this *Zeal* of theirs, hath not been at all times and in all persons, alike guided by *Knowledge*. Now *Zeal*, as it is of excellent use, where it sees it's way: so is it very *dangerous* company, where it goes on in the *dark*: And these Men, knowing the *Disposition* of the people, do labour all they can to mis-inform their *knowledge*, and misguide their *Zeal*, and so to fire that into a *Sedition*, in hope that they, whom they causlessly hate, might miscatry in it.

For the *main* *scope* of these *Libels* is, to kindle a *Jealousie* in mens minds, that there are some great *Plots* in hand, to change the *Orthodox Religion* established in *England*, and to bring in, I know not what, *Romish Superstition* in the Room of it. As if the *external decent worship* of *God* could not be upheld in this *Kingdom*, without bringing in of *Popery*.

Now

Now by this *Art* of theirs, give me leave to tell you, that the *King* is most desperately abused and wounded in the minds of his people. For there is not a more cunning trick in the World, to *mislead* the peoples hearts from their *Sovereign*, than to persuade them that he is changing *true Religion*, and about to bring in gross *Superstition* upon them.

For his Majesty. This I know, and upon this occasion take it my duty to speak: There is no *Prince* in *Christendom* more sincere, both in the *Truth* of the Religion here established, and in *Resolution* to maintain it.

And for the *Prelates*. I assure my self, they cannot be so base, as to live *Prelates* in the Church of *England*, and labour to bring in the *Superstitions* of the Church of *Rome*, upon themselves and it. And if any should be so *foul*, I do not onely leave him to *Gods Judgement*, but if these *Libellers*, or any other, can discover that his base and *irreligious* falsehood, to share also, and severe *punishment* from the State: And in any just way, no mans hand shall be more, or sooner against him, than mine shall be.

For as basely as these men conceive of us, yet I thank God, we know our duty well both to God and the King: And I know that all the duty we owe to the King, is under God: And our great happiness is, that we live under a Gracious and a Religious King, that will ever give us leave to serve God first, and Him

I shall end all with a passage out of S. Cyprian, when he, then Bishop of Carthage, was bitterly vexed upon by a pack of Schismatics, his answer was, and is now mine; They have vexed both bitterly and falsely upon me, and yet *Non speret me paria cum illis facere*: it becomes not me to answer them with the like, either *Levities* or *Revilings*, but to *Speak* and *Write* that only which becomes *Sacerdorem Dei*; a Brief of

FINIS.



